

nations have launched wars against Israel and attempted to cripple its economy through boycotts. Terrorists have attacked repeatedly, killing civilians and soldiers alike. Iranian leaders have threatened to “wipe Israel off the map” and are steadily moving toward acquiring the means to do so. Israel's enemies are engaged in a campaign to delegitimize the Jewish state.

Even in the face of continual efforts to defeat and destroy Israel, the Jewish state has been successful in establishing more peaceful relations with its neighbors and making its people more secure. Israel has signed peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan. Its efforts to combat terrorism have resulted in a reduction in terrorist attacks—cutting that number in half since 2006. Israel also continues to seek peace with the Palestinians.

Despite overwhelming odds, Israel has not only survived, but it has flourished for the past 62 years. Israel has established a representative democracy with an independent judicial system and strong rule of law. Its citizens are free to worship and speak as they wish.

Israel has also established itself as a world leader in technological innovation. Despite more than half its land being desert, Israelis have “made the desert bloom,” growing food for consumption and export. Its universities are first-rate, producing new generations of artists, entrepreneurs, scientists and doctors. And, despite its size, Israel produces more start ups than many larger nations. In fact, there are more Israeli companies than European companies listed on the NASDAQ exchange.

Israel is also a nation that cares about the fate of others. Immediately after learning of the devastating earthquake in Haiti this January, Israel sent hundreds of its citizens to treat the injured and search for survivors. The Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported after the earthquake that only an estimated 25 Jews lived in Haiti. But, that didn't stop Israel from committing manpower and money to do everything it could to save and preserve all life in Haiti.

Through struggles and achievements both, the United States has stood by Israel's side. Our nations share many of the same values and are partners in an effort to build a better world.

There are those that argue, however, that the United States would be better off if we distanced ourselves from Israel, if we weakened our alliance. I am here to say that this would be the worst thing we could do. The United States and Israel are both stronger when we work together against common threats. Economic and cultural ties between our two nations enrich the lives of Americans and Israelis. Our friendship is important and must remain strong.

Today, on Israel's Independence Day, I commend the people of Israel for their many remarkable achievements, congratulate them as they celebrate their 62nd anniversary of independence, and look forward to many more years of friendship and cooperation between our two nations.

TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT MICHAEL CARDENAZ

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a hero from my congressional district, Staff Sergeant Michael Cardenaz, United States Army. Today I ask that the House of Representatives honor and remember this incredible young man who died in service to our country.

SSG Cardenaz was born in Corona, California in 1980. He attended local schools in Corona and loved his hometown. He joined the Army after high school and had been previously deployed twice to both Kosovo and Iraq. On February 20, 2010, SSG Cardenaz had been serving nine months with the 2–12 Infantry, 4th BCT, 4th Infantry Division in Afghanistan when he was killed by a rocket propelled grenade (RPG) in Kunar. He was 29 years old.

SSG Cardenaz is remembered fondly by friends and family as an avid Dodger fan who loved fishing, listening to music, visiting new places and making people laugh. He was also an exemplary soldier and had been awarded the Soldier's Medal which is awarded to an Army soldier of the United States who has distinguished himself by an act of heroism involving personal hazard and the voluntary risk of life under conditions not involving actual conflict with an enemy. A fellow service member wrote about an occurrence for which SSG Cardenaz received the Soldier's Medal in Baqubah, Iraq which said:

Cardenaz and his platoon leader . . . risked their lives numerous times underwater trying to save a rolled over humvee with four trapped men inside. At times, both men ingested filthy canal water. They choked, gagged and vomited, only to go back under in attempts to get those men out. It was cold, they were in full kit, neither quit until the bodies were recovered. They were too late, but words can not begin to describe their sense of loyalty to their own. Every soldier should be lucky enough to be around men who never quit to bring them back.

In addition to the Soldier's Medal, SSG Cardenaz also was awarded the Bronze Star and the Army Commendation with Valor. SSG Cardenaz is survived by his wife of seven years, Macarena; five children, Jason, Jasmine, Mariella, Mariliz and Marianna; parents, Miguel and Rosellen Cardenaz; three sisters, Priscilla, Sandra and Monica; brother, Steven; many aunts, uncles, and cousins; one niece and one nephew.

As we look at the incredibly rich military history of our country we realize that this history is comprised of men, just like SSG Cardenaz, who bravely fought for the ideals of freedom and democracy. Each story is unique and humbling for those of us who, far from the dangers they have faced, live our lives in relative comfort and ease. The day the Cardenaz family learned of their husband, father, son and brother's death was probably the hardest day they have ever faced and our thoughts, prayers and deepest gratitude for SSG Cardenaz's sacrifice goes out to them. There are no words that can relieve their pain and what words we can offer only begin to convey our deep respect and highest appreciation.

SSG Cardenaz's family have all given a part of themselves in the loss of their loved one and I hope they know that the goodness he brought to this world and the sacrifice he has made will never be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING THE HOWARD COLLEGE MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM 2010 DIVISION I NJCAA NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I proudly congratulate the Howard College Men's basketball team in Big Spring, Texas, for winning the NJCAA Division I Men's National Championship in 2010.

Led by the Division I Coach of the Year, Mark Adams, the Hawks finished the 2009–2010 season bringing home a National Championship. The championship squad includes Lamont Austin, Moses Sundufu, Dante Menter, Prince Obasi, Shaad O'Garro, Josh Watkins, Jordan Kinnear, Carlos Emory, Virgil Cissoko, Stefan Tica, Joe Bright, Damion McGee, and the Division I Player of the Year, Jae Crowder.

The Howard College Hawks provided NJCAA basketball fans with a memorable comeback in the title game as the Hawks clawed back from a nine point deficit with five minutes to play, forcing an overtime battle against Three Rivers Community College. The Hawks then never trailed, hanging on for the 85–80 victory and the opportunity to be called the NJCAA 2010 National Champions.

I applaud the Hawks' hard work and success. With great support from the community, the team proved itself as the best men's basketball team in the NJCAA Division I. The Howard College Hawks continue to exemplify the principles of competitive spirit and success on and off the court. Congratulations, Hawks!

RECOGNIZING REP. JACK BROWN

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rep. Jack Brown of St. Johns, an exemplary public servant and an Arizona icon who is retiring from the Arizona State Legislature after a distinguished career that has spanned four decades.

Rep. Brown was elected to his first stint in the Legislature in 1962, during the Kennedy Administration. A rancher and an Arizona native, Jack Brown has worked tirelessly as an advocate for rural interests. But his leadership and influence—particularly on issues of private property rights, education and parks funding—will be felt across the entire State for generations to come.

Rep. Brown is respected and admired by his colleagues and constituents for his calm manner, good humor, and common sense. Among the many notable examples: Rep. Brown, a lifelong Democrat, worked across party lines with the late Senator Jake Flake and Rep. Bill